AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

.1. (currently amended) A cyanine compound represented by general formula (I):

$$\begin{array}{c|c}
R_1 & R_2 & R_4 & R_3 \\
\hline
A & & & & & \\
N_4 & & & & & \\
Y_1 & & & & & \\
\end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{c|c}
R_1 & R_2 & R_4 & R_3 \\
\hline
R_2 & & & & \\
R_3 & & & & \\
\end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{c|c}
B & & & \\
\end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{c|c}
(1) & & & \\
\end{array}$$

wherein ring A and ring B each represent a benzene or naphthalene ring that may be substituted; at least one of the pair of adjacent groups R1 and R2 and the pair of adjacent groups R3 and R4 represent a pair of benzyl groups, and the other paired groups each represent an alkyl group having 1 to 4 carbon atoms or are connected to each other to form a 3- to 6-membered ring, and when one of the other pair of groups is not a pair of benzyl groups, then these each are an alkyl group of 1 to 4 carbon atoms or are connected to form a 3 to 6 member ring; Y1 and Y2 each represent an organic group having 1 to 30 carbon atoms; An^{m-} represents an m-valent anion; m represents an integer 1 or 2; and p represents a coefficient for maintaining the charge neutrality.

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- 2. (currently amended) The cyanine compound of claim 1, wherein both of the pair of adjacent groups R1 and R2 and the pair of adjacent groups R3 and R4 represent a pair of benzyl groups.
- 3. (currently amended) The cyanine compound of claim 1, wherein ring A and/or ring B constituting [[the]] \underline{a} heterocyclic ring with the adjacent two benzyl groups is a naphthalene ring.
- 4. (currently amended) An optical recording material containing the cyanine compound of claim 1, wherein[[,]] the optical recording material is formed on a substrate to make an optical recording medium.
- 5. (previously presented) An optical recording medium comprising a substrate and a thin film of the optical recording material of claim 4 on the substrate.